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TELEGRAM

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BT

CONTROL: 18244
RECD NY: 11-10-73 12:41

ACTION: KITCHEN
DISTR: A-B-C

Action Taken	
Initials	W. A. J.
Date	Nov. 19
Remarks	

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STATE 222510

ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR
SUBJ: WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE

1. WE HAVE DEVELOPED PRELIMINARY USG POSITION ON SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PROPOSAL FOR A WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE FOR USDEL AT FAO CONFERENCE BEGINNING NOVEMBER 10. WE INTEND TO USE THIS IN FAO CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS OF THE PROPOSAL NOW SCHEDULED TO BEGIN NOVEMBER 19. ADDRESSEE POSTS SHOULD CONVEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS POSITION TO HOST GOVERNMENTS EMPHASIZING ALSO OUR DESIRE TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH MAJOR IMPORTING AND EXPORTING COUNTRIES IN PLANNING FOR THE WFC.

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF USG POSITION PAPER ON WFC FOR FAO CONFERENCE: BEGIN TEXT

PROBLEM

SECRETARY KISSINGER CALLED FOR A WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE UNDER U.N. AUSPICES AS ONE OF HIS FIRST ACTS AS SECRETARY OF STATE. THE U.S. OBJECTIVE IS TO MAKE THIS CONFERENCE A SUCCESS IN EXPANDING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON FOOD ISSUES. U.S. LEADERSHIP IS REQUIRED TO STEER THE CONFERENCE AGENDA TOWARD ISSUES WHERE PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE AND AWAY FROM ITEMS WHICH WILL RESULT IN A WASTE OF TIME OR, WORSE, IN CONFRONTATION AMONG COUNTRIES WITH DIFFERING INTERESTS.

THE PROPOSAL FOR HOLDING A WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE UNDER U.N. AUSPICES IN 1974 WILL BE PUT ON THE FAO CONFERENCE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION. FAO WILL REPORT TO THE RESUMED SESSION OF THE 55TH ECOSOC ON NOVEMBER 23. THE COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT INFLUENCE ON FURTHER ACTION TAKEN AT ECOSOC AND ULTIMATELY THE 28TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHICH HAS PUT THE ITEM ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENDA FOR DEBATE.

THE U.S. INTERVENTION ON THIS ITEM IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT. EVEN THOUGH THE IDEA OF A WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE HAS NOW BEEN ENDORSED BY DECISION OF ECOSOC, AND THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE WILL ULTIMATELY BECOME A U.N. SPONSORED CONFERENCE, OTHER NATIONS ARE LOOKING TO THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN PROPOSING MORE SPECIFIC TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE. AGRICULTURE SECRETARY BUTZ WILL INITIATE DISCUSSION OF THIS ITEM IN HIS OPENING SPEECH.

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UNITED STATES POSITION

THE DELEGATION SHOULD NOTE THAT IN THE U.S. PROPOSAL TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE U.N., WE EXPLAINED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE WOULD BE TO DISCUSS WAYS TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FOOD SUPPLIES IN THE FACE OF RISING DEMAND AND COMBAT HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION RESULTING FROM NATURAL DISASTERS. THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT THE PRECISE AGENDA SHOULD BE WORKED OUT IN PREPARATORY MEETINGS BY INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND THAT EVERY ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE TO FOCUS THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE'S ATTENTION ON FEW KEY TOPICS WHERE EARLY PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IS POSSIBLE. TENTATIVE U.S. THINKING ON THE COMPOSITION OF AN AGENDA IS SET OUT BELOW.

(1) THE FIRST TASK OF THE CONFERENCE WILL BE TO ASSESS THE LONG-TERM DEMAND AND SUPPLY OUTLOOK FOR DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF FOOD. IT WILL BE DESIRABLE TO TAKE A MORE SOPHISTICATED LOOK AT THE MAGNITUDES OF POTENTIAL SURPLUSES OR DEFICITS UNDER "HIGH" AND "LOW" ASSUMPTIONS FOR DEMAND AND SUPPLY THAN HAS BEEN DONE IN THE PAST. BY DEVELOPING THIS TYPE OF INFORMATION, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN PLAN INTELLIGENTLY FOR SHORT TERM CONTINGENCIES AND ADJUST PRODUCTION POLICIES FOR LONG RUN BALANCE. IT IS THE U.S. BELIEF, BASED ON OUR OWN ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION, THAT THE WORLD MUST ANTICIPATE BOTH PERIODS OF SHORTAGES AND PERIODS OF ADEQUATE OR MORE THAN ADEQUATE SUPPLIES. IT IS THE FORMER SITUATION THAT THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE SHOULD FOCUS ON.

(2) AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PACE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE AFFECTING BOTH SUPPLY AND DEMAND FACTORS WILL ALSO BE CRUCIAL TO INTELLIGENT INTERNATIONAL ACTION. AS HAS BEEN ABUNDANTLY ILLUSTRATED BY THE GREEN REVOLUTION, IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY CAN LAG SUBSTANTIALLY AS UNFORESEEN CONSTRAINTS ARE ENCOUNTERED. IT WOULD, THEREFORE, BE USEFUL TO REACH A GREATER INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WILL BE REQUIRED TO BREAK PRODUCTION BOTTLENECKS AND IMPROVE TECHNIQUES FOR FOOD STORAGE. ON THE DEMAND SIDE, CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE OF NEW VARIETIES OF HIGHER YIELDING CROPS AND SYNTHETIC FOODS MAY BE A GREATER CONSTRAINT THAN TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF PRODUCTION. ON THE SUPPLY SIDE, WE MUST SEEK WAYS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO IMPROVE THEIR OWN FOOD PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES ON AN ECONOMIC BASIS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE A COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE SO THAT DEPENDENCE ON FOOD AID IN THE FUTURE CAN BE LESSENED AND THEY ARE LESS SUBJECT TO THE VAGARIES OF CHANGES IN THE WORLD'S FOOD SUPPLY.

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PRINCIPLES, NOT DETAILED NEGOTIATIONS OF SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS. THE INTENT OF THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS IN GATT IS TO REACH AGREEMENT ON SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS BY COUNTRIES ON ADJUSTMENTS IN THE FUTURE WORLD TRADING ORDER; THESE MAY OF COURSE INCLUDE MECHANISMS FOR TURNING THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES INTO SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS ON SUCH ISSUES AS STOCKPILING AND FOOD AID.

(5) THE UNITED STATES BELIEVES THAT THE KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE WILL BE THE WORK OF AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE IN DECIDING WHICH OF THE ABOVE (OR OTHER) BASIC ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT, AND IN DEVELOPING OR SELECTING PROPOSALS FOR PRINCIPLES TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE. THE COMMITTEE SHOULD HAVE A SECRETARY GENERAL AND STAFF APPOINTED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

(7) THE DELEGATION SHOULD STATE THAT WHILE THE UNITED STATES HAS PROPOSED THAT THIS CONFERENCE BE HELD, THE DECISION OF THE 55TH ECOSOC AND THE PROBABLE ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION BY THE 28TH GA PLACES THE DECISION ON ALL MAJOR ASPECTS OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE U.N. MEMBERSHIP. THE U.S. IS INTERESTED, THEREFORE, IN THE VIEWS OF OTHER COUNTRIES AND URGES THEM TO CONSIDER WHAT WAYS THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE CAN BEST SERVE THE BASIC OBJECTIVES DESCRIBED ABOVE.

(9) WITH REGARD TO COSTS, THE UNITED STATES EXPECTS THAT PREPARATORY COSTS WOULD BE MET BY AGENCIES INVOLVED, PARTICULARLY THE FAO. COSTS OF HOLDING THE WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE ITSELF WOULD BE PAID BY THE U.N.

(10) SUGGESTED TERMS OF REFERENCE WHICH THE DELEGATION MAY STATE ARE CITED IN THE DISCUSSION SECTION.

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PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE
UNDER U.N. AUSPICES

IT IS PROPOSED:

THAT THE UNITED NATIONS SPONSOR THE HOLDING OF A
WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE IN NOVEMBER 1974;

THAT THIS CONFERENCE BE AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL
CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL;

THAT THE CONFERENCE BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF TWO
WEEKS, PREFERABLY AT ROME, WHICH WE CONSIDER THE MOST
APPROPRIATE SITE FOR A U.N. CONFERENCE ON THE SUBJECT
OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE;

THAT THE CONFERENCE BE HELD FOR THE FOLLOWING
PURPOSES:

1. TO IMPROVE WORLDWIDE COOPERATION IN MAINTAINING
ADEQUATE FOOD SUPPLIES; THAT TOWARD THIS END MEMBER
NATIONS CONSIDER:

A. DETERMINATION OF LONG-TERM WORLD FOOD AND
NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS; DETERMINATION OF LONG-TERM
PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS; DETERMINATION OF LIKELY
YEARLY FLUCTUATION IN PRODUCTION AND THE LEVEL OF STOCKS
DESIRABLE TO AVOID CRITICAL FOOD SHORTAGES IN A
PREDICTABLE SERIES OF BAD PRODUCTION YEARS;

B. THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IMPROVED INFORMATIONAL
SYSTEM TO PROVIDE EARLY WARNING OF POTENTIAL FOOD
SHORTAGES;

C. THE NATURE OF MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR
STOCKHOLDING INCLUDING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXPORTERS,
IMPORTERS, DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, DEVELOPING COUNTRIES,
CENTRALLY PLANNED AND FREE MARKET ECONOMIES;

D. THE ROLE OF STOCKS; REQUIREMENTS FOR TECHNICAL
AND CAPITAL ASSISTANCE ON STOCKS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES;

E. THE POSSIBILITY OF AGREEMENT ON SEVERAL
PRINCIPLES COVERING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH GROUP
OF COUNTRIES;

2. TO EXPLORE THE MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES INVOLVED
IN FOOD AID:

A. ASSURANCE THAT FOOD AID DOES NOT DISCOURAGE LDC
EFFORTS TO MAXIMIZE THEIR EFFICIENT PRODUCTION;

B. MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL AID-GIVING NATIONS
FOR FOOD AID;

C. IMPROVED INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION OF FOOD AID;
PRINCIPLES FOR FOOD AID DONORS AND RECIPIENTS.

3. TO IMPROVE COORDINATION OF DISASTER RELIEF
EFFORTS:

A. COORDINATION FOR MEETING IMMEDIATE DISASTER
EFFECTS;

B. COORDINATION FOR LONGER TERM RECOVERY;

C. INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION ON MEANS TO AVOID
DISASTERS;

D. SOURCES OF FOOD AND OTHER COMMODITIES REQUIRED
FOR DISASTER RELIEF; PREPOSITIONING; PRE-FUNDING.

THAT A PREPARATORY COMMITTEE BE ESTABLISHED AT THE
EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT TO WORK OUT A PRECISE AGENDA.
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